

Submission Date	Please share your thoughts with us about parking in Amherst Center:
9/23/14 12:00 PM	<p>Long-time residents never have a problem parking because they know all the "hidden" but legal spots, those behind shops or restaurants. Out-of-towners have a harder time. Clear signage is the answer here.</p> <p>Patricia Holland</p>
9/23/14 3:34 PM	<p>Parking seems balanced at present even when colleges are in session. With increase in population downtown and hopefully busy businesses, parking will be in higher demand. Off the main drag parking lots seem to work well for longer stays such as for dining/events. If a Grocery Co-Op ever goes in downtown there should be parking with that building mostly due to shoppers with grocery bag loads. New housing options do not need to have designated parking. Maybe an off site lot with spaces for rent could be an option.</p> <p>Terrible is the parking garage near the Bang Ctr. What a waste of money that was. So few spots for the cost and as a woman I avoid it with it being underground with lots of dark corners.</p> <p>Cost of parking is also a balance between what people will pay without hurting businesses by charging too much.</p> <p>I am willing to pay more for parking but I know that's not true for many others or those who can't afford it.</p> <p>Hopefully the future has more people walking, biking or busing to downtown but the reality is that there are long cold winters here and parking must still be available.</p> <p>I would love to see a downtown Amherst with more shopping and reduce my trips to shop in Hadley. I would also like to see the mixed use buildings go up in the Gateway area and more closer to the UMass Campus linking downtown and the university.</p>
9/25/14 9:19 PM	<p>Chancellor Subbaswamy and his associates have reportedly been negotiating with the legislature to raise the dollar limits in the University's budget.</p> <p>This would enable the University to provide more student housing on campus and ease some of the traffic stress on the downtown.</p> <p>How are these negotiations proceeding? How often have they met? Who are they?</p> <p>Have representatives of town government participated these negotiations?</p>
10/1/14 6:36 PM	

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1/9/15 12:58 PM	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I believe it is essential that the town knows exactly what the developers of both large apartment complexes are going to tell residents who want to know where to park their cars should they not choose to purchase an inside space or...there are not spaces available. I have not heard them be specific about where they believe cars will be parked. Some assurance has to be given to the owners of Bertucci's, Zanna's, etc. that their lots will not become the off site parking for tenants. Amherst's retailers can not afford to lose business because their customers can not find a place to park.</p>
1/12/15 10:22 AM	<p>Regarding permits: 1) Suggest year-round -- current academic year system outdated, summer spaces needed by workers taken by others who simply prefer not paying; 2) Suggest fee raised from \$25 to \$100 yearly -- Remains an excellent bargain for full-time workers, screens out the many who are temporary, part-time yet have full-time permit (could be divided into 6 month segments); 3) Some areas apparently extensively used by permitted tenants (cf: Amity Street) rather than workers -- I believe that elsewhere in town, non owner-occupied houses must have off-street parking provided; 4) Suggest town portion of CVS lot (now largely empty in daytime) charge 25 cents/hour with no time limit -- even better would be consolidate the 2 lots and allow first hour free, then 50 cents/hour (and yes, it's a good place for a second garage.</p>
1/20/15 10:31 AM	<p>Install a Pay By Phone system like the MBTA uses</p>
1/20/15 3:58 PM	<p>I live on High Street, and have an office downtown. I walk, ride my bicycle, or take the bus if it happens to be going down Main Street.</p> <p>From my perspective, there is plenty of parking downtown, although more 15-minute-free parking spaces would be great (for when we pick up takeout or run a quick errand in the car). The only times I've had to spend time looking for a parking space are busy nights around dinner time, but there always seems to be space either behind Town Hall, in the lower level of the garage, or behind CVS.</p> <p>When I do need to park, the timed parking machines are annoying; waiting in line for a tourist to figure out what buttons to press is frustrating, and it seems like the keypad sometimes only gets half my keypresses.</p> <p>If revenue from fines/permits would be the same, then replacing the machines with a combination of coin meters and "free 2 hour parking / permit required for more than 2 hours" would be better, in my opinion.</p>
1/20/15 6:39 PM	<p>In my view, the town has plenty of parking. What we have is perhaps fragmented, perhaps always not well signed. The CVS lot should be integrated into a single lot, administered by the town, and the several landowners given a share of the take. If we were to do this and restripe the lot, we'd gain dozens of spaces.</p>

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1/20/15 7:22 PM	<p>Parking downtown near the Bangs Center and Ann Whalen Apartments remain problematic. The parking garage on the ground level is frequently full, and many women and seniors do not feel safe parking in the lower level. There are many spaces owned by the town against the fence behind the Ann Whalen Apartments that remain constantly vacant, yet if a care provider to a disabled resident needs a place to park for 30 minutes, they are instantly ticketed- yet the majority of the spaces remain vacant. When the apartment complexes were built in the 70's many seniors/disabled people did not have their own vehicles, as times have changed and people are living longer and are somewhat healthier, there are more seniors needing parking where they reside, yet there is insufficient parking to meet their needs. There is concern for the new apartments being built without parking. The thought is that the residents occupying these units will not have vehicles; and I believe that the issues that have occurred with the elderly minimal parking will occur in a few short years (if not sooner) when these new apartments are built and occupied. Amherst has a significant population of disabled individuals who cannot walk into town to take care of their business will use their own vehicles to go a very short distance; if they do not drive, then they rely on public transportation to get around. Some thought needs to be considered on our aging/disabled residents.</p>
1/21/15 2:11 PM	<p>I attended last nights forum #2 and was encouraged by the fact that the subject is being taken seriously by involving people from all aspects of Amherst life but also uneasy that the town will be unable to use this mundane but essential issue as a stepping stone to a more vibrant down-town. Certainly it is wise to look at what has already been done and where we are now but do we really need consultants when we have paid employees who, like Jeff Baggs, seem interested and competent to not only gather data but come up with sensible solutions to alleviate and improve the present situation?</p> <p>My comments, were serious and fit with Mr Root's, a long time resident of the town as opposed to my outsider status. Park and Ride is a tried a true system that works where history has created a downtown unfriendly to auto dependency and where public transport is established. It could eliminate the shortage of space in town by making it advantageous financially and physically for people who work in town, (how many drive into town and park?), to leave their cars on the perimeter and ride for free into town on PVTa or for a small fee on alternative ini buses. The present \$25 permit fee could be eliminated for down town employees, or made much more realistic in terms of cost, (more like \$25 a month). Likewise down-town resident permit costs should be significantly increased to reflect the real 'benefit', (only to the owner), of 'garaging' a car on the public highway, thus limiting opportunity for business and visitors.</p> <p>What about using trolley cars or electric mini buses for Park and Ride from N. Amherst perhaps using the previous trolley barn site, (negotiated with Ms Jones to promote activity on her commercial site) or the Recreation Center. Stops could be limited to N Amherst common, UMass, (north and south), and north and south down-town with a coin cost or swipe card to the rider.</p> <p>The park and ride approach can return the town-center to a complete street without dangerous street parking during business hours. The extra space would allow for center islands for planting and pedestrian crossing safety. This environment could attract useful</p>

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1/22/15 11:54 AM	<p>Attended the public meeting- found it interesting that the TOA suggests there is sufficient parking available. Although there may be many parking spaces, it does seem that the parking is not in the right places that people need them. There are parking lots in the community that require permits (some for town employees) that get unused because employees feel it is too far from where they want to be and don't park in the spaces, leaving them vacant, where other members of the community could utilize the spaces. A more in-depth look at all the spaces and current uses should be considered in the development of a comprehensive parking plan.</p>
1/27/15 11:21 AM	<p>Most times of day there is plenty of available parking downtown. The crunch comes between 5 and 7:30 p.m. Also, some people unrealistically expect that they should be able to park right in front of where they'd like to go, causing the Pray Street lot to be underutilized. Could a deal be reached with CVS to join its lot with the Town's and re-stripe to make more spots available there, perhaps sharing the revenue? As it is, people frequently use the reserved CVS spaces to park for visits to the Jones Library, not CVS. A new parking garage would be nice but expensive. The Town has urgent need for a new fire station and a new DPW headquarters. Wildwood School needs major capital improvements, and the Jones Library wants the same. The Town will have to prioritize and stage such projects in order to afford them; I would put a parking garage near the end of the queue.</p> <p>Kay Moran</p>